

**From:** [wolpert@sonic.net](mailto:wolpert@sonic.net)  
**To:** -- City Clerk  
**Subject:** code updates  
**Date:** Thursday, December 15, 2022 11:47:17 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[22-1215 ltr re code updates.docx](#)

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Good morning, Kendall-

I have attached some thoughts on the code updates to be discussed at the next City Council meeting. Please distribute to the Mayor and Council members.

Thank you.

-Bill



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## GREEN BUILDING ARCHITECTS

December 14, 2022

Petaluma City Council  
11 English Street  
Petaluma, CA 94952

Re: 2022 Building Code updates

Madam Mayor and Council members,

In reading the proposed 2022 code changes, I see a few things that have caused confusion in the past and others that need clarification. They are as follows:

1. **105.2** – 120 sf sheds cannot have gypsum board or a light for the interior, yet they can be used as playhouses. Not having an LED light is unsafe, even for a tool shed. The current code would not even allow for pegboard. Gypboard walls make a cleaner play space and less likely to house spiders and insects. Leave out the plumbing and mechanical, but please allow electrical light and clean wall surfaces.
2. **Section 202**, Definitions – Substantial Improvement (Pertains also to 903.6.1)
  - The 50% remodel rule triggers the need for fire sprinklers and should be easy to understand. However, the Fire Department's method of calculating the area of remodel is a very liberal calculation of floor area and sometimes other surfaces. For example, when work in one room penetrates a common wall, the Fire Department includes all the area of the adjacent room. This is confusing, unfair, and disproportionally affects smaller homes. The rule should be 50% of floor area only where work is being performed. Please clarify.
3. **505.1** Address Identification – Historic Districts should be exempt from illuminated numerals on the homes for the following reasons:
  - It is not in keeping with the historic character of the architecture or the neighborhood.
  - Our Planning Dept required downcast lighting to maintain a dark sky on the exterior of homes.

Glad to see the emphasis on electrification and striving for zero-carbon.

Sincerely,

Bill Wolpert